Date of John's Apocalypse
Early Date Advocates

- **PRETERISM AND THE DATE OF REVELATION**
- **SYSTEMATIC APPROACHES**
- **STUDY TOPICS:**
  - Authorship: **John the Apostle**, the Presbyter, Other
  - **Babylon**: Rome, **Jerusalem**, Other
  - **Date of Composition**: Before AD70, **After AD70**, Composite
  - Language of Origin: **Greek**, **Syriac**, Other
  - Antichrist: **Nero**, Nero Redivivus, Nero Rediturus, Etc.
  - Origin: Christian, Christian Redaction of Jewish Apocalyptic

RELEVANT PDFs:

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  - Bibliography: Writers Advocating Early Dating of the Apocalypse
  - 1788: **Nathaniel Lardner**, Lardner on the Date of the Apocalypse
  - 1855: Journal, Journal of Sacred Literature on the Neronic Date
  - 1869: Journal, BibSac Date of the Apocalypse From Internal Evidence
  - 1869: Journal, MacDonald on The Date of Revelation
  - 1872: James Glasgow, The Apocalypse Translated and Expounded – This places the visions of John early in Nero's reign, while the two Newtons, Stuart, etc., place it nearer the close of that reign, or very soon after it, and before the fall of Jerusalem. the early date has a great preponderance of evidence in its favor. (p. 54)
  - 1888: Journal, Bibliotecha Sacra – Late Date of the Apocalypse
  - 1932: The Apocalypse: Christadelphian – A view that the Apocalypse was written before A.D. 70 against errant Judaism virtually nullifies its impact on this issue. The primary purpose of this booklet is to show that an early date and Jewish application is wholly against the facts.
  - 1979: E. Earle Ellis, Dating the New Testament
  - 1993: **Ken Gentry**, The Date and Theme of Revelation, The Book of Revelation and Eschatology

- 1994: Robert Thomas, Theonomy and the Dating of Revelation
- 2000-2002: Jack and Rexella Van Impe, **On Preterism**
- 2011: Francis X. Gumerlock, External Evidence for an Early Date of Revelation: Ten Early Date Traditions in Ancient Christianity
- 2015: Shane J. Wood, Dating the Book of Revelation – The External and Internal Evidence
- 2018: Bill Wepfer, **Which Way to the End?**

Arethas

"For there were many, yea, a countless multitude from among the Jews, who believed in Christ : as even they testify, who said to St Paul on his arrival at Jerusalem : Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe. (Acts xxi. 20.) And He who gave this revelation to the Evangelist, declares, that these men shall not share the destruction inflicted by the Romans. For the ruin brought by the Romans had not yet fallen upon the Jews, when this Evangelist received these prophecies : and he did not receive them at Jerusalem, but in Ionia near Ephesus. For after the suffering of the Lord he remained only fourteen years at Jerusalem, during which time the tabernacle of the mother of the Lord, which had conceived this Divine offspring, was preserved in this temporal life, after the suffering and resurrection of her incorruptible Son. For he continued with her as with a mother committed to him by the Lord. For after her death it is reported that he no longer chose to remain in Judaea, but passed over to Ephesus, where, as we have said, this present Apocalypse also was composed ; which is a revelation of future things, inasmuch as forty years after the ascension of the Lord this tribulation came upon the Jews."

Clement of Alexandria (150-215)

"For the teaching of our Lord at His advent, beginning with Augustus and Tiberius, was completed in the middle of the times of Tiberius. And that of the apostles, embracing the ministry of Paul, **end with Nero**." (Miscellanies 7:17.)

Epiphanies (315-403)

States Revelation was written under "Claudius [Nero] Caesar." (Epiphanies, Heresies 51:12,)

Irenaeus' Quote (Used as Grounds for Late Date Theory)

"We will not, however, incur the risk of pronouncing positively as to the name of Antichrist; for if it were necessary that his name should be distinctly revealed in this present time, it would

have been announced by him who beheld the Revelation. For 'he' [John?] or 'it' [Revelation?] was seen . . . towards the end of Domitian's reign." (Irenaeus, Against Heresies 5:30:3)

Muratorian Canon (A.D. 170)
"the blessed Apostle Paul, following the rule of his **predecessor** John, writes to no more than seven churches by name. "

"John too, indeed, in the Apocalypse, although he writes to only seven churches, yet addresses all. " (ANF 5:603).

Tertullian
"Since, moreover, you are close upon Italy, you have Rome, from which there comes even into our own hands the very authority (of apostles themselves). How happy is its church, on which the apostles poured forth all their doctrine along with their blood! where Peter endures a passion like his Lord's; where Paul wins his crown in a death like John's! where the Apostle John was first plunged, unhurt, into boiling oil, and thence remitted to his island-exile."

Greg Bahnsen (1984)
"A partial list of scholars who have supported the early date for Revelation, gleaned unsystematically from my reading, would include the following 18th and 19th writers not already mentioned just above: John Lightfoot, Harenbert, Hartwig, Michaelis, Tholuck, Clarke,

Bishop Newton, James MacDonald, Gieseler, Tilloch, Bause, Zullig, Swegler, De Wett, Lucke, Bohmer, Hilgenfeld, Mommsen, Ewald, Neander, Volkmar, Renan, Credner, Kernkel, B. Weiss, Reuss, Thiersch, Bunsen, Stier, Auberlen, Maurice, Niermeyer, Desprez, Aube, Keim, De Pressence, Cowles, Scholten, Beck, Dusterdiek, Simcox, S. Davidson, Beyschlag, Salmon, Hausrath. Continuing on into the 20th century we could list Plummer, Selwyn, J.V. Bartlet, C.A. Scott, Erbes, Edmundson, Henderson, and others. If one's reading has been limited pretty much to the present and immediately preceding generations of writers on Revelation, then the foregoing names may be somewhat unfamiliar to him, but they were not unrecognized in previous eras. When we combine these names with the yet outstanding stature of Schaff, Terry, Lightfoot, Westcott, and Hort, we can feel the severity of Beckwith's *understatement* when in 1919 he described the Neronian dating for Revelation as "a view held by many down to recent times."[40] By many indeed! It has been described, as we saw above, as "the ruling view" of critics," by "the majority of modern critics," by "most modern scholars," and by "the whole force of modern criticism." The weight of scholarship placed behind the Neronian option for the dating of Revelation has been staggering. In our won day it has gained the support of such worthies as C.C. Torrey, J.A.T. Robinson, and F.F. Bruce and has been popularized by **Jay Adams**.[41] In 1956 Torrey could write about the number 666, "It is now the accepted conclusion that the beast is the emperor Nero."[42]" (Historical Setting for the Dating of Revelation)

James Burton Coffman (1984)
"The epic work of John A.T. Robinson in *Redating the New Testament* is one of the most significant works this century with regard to the date of the New Testament, all of which he affirms to have been written before A.D.70, a conclusion which we believe to be correct." (*Commentary on John*; Abilene, TX: ACU Press; p. 12)

Conybeare and Howson (1870)

"Concerning the Book of Revelation I will say nothing, except to invite attention to the arguments by which Doctor MacDonald endeavors to fix its date. The reasoning seems to me to be very well drawn out, which assigns the writing of this part of the Holy Scripture to a time intermediate between the Gospel and the Epistles of St. John." (*Life and Writings of John*, p. xxxiii, Introduction)

George Edmundson (1913)

"I mean the Apocalypse of St. John. The Apocalypse is full of references to historical events of which the author had quite recently been himself an eyewitness at Rome, or which were fresh in the memories of the Roman Christians with whom he had been associating, and it can be dated with great exactitude from internal evidence as having been written at the beginning of the year 70 A.D." (**The Church in Rome in the First Century** PDF)

Rev. Prof. George P. Fisher (1864)

XI. "The mythical theory is inconsistent with a fair view of the temper and character of those immediately concerned in the founding of Christianity. Christ chose twelve disciples to be constantly with him, in order that an authentic impression of his own character, and an authentic representation of his deeds and teaching might go forth to the world. We find them, even in Paul, designated as "the Twelve," and a marked distinction is accorded to them in the early written Apocalypse.* * 1 Cor. xv. 5, Rev. xxi. 14. The Revelation, it is allowed by the Tubingen School, was written about A. D. '70." (The Conflict with Skepticism and Unbelief. Second Article: The Mythical Theory of Strauss, P. 250)

John Fiske (1876)

"Applying the imagery of Daniel, it became a logical conclusion that he must have ascended into the sky, whence he might shortly be expected to make his appearance, to enact the scenes

foretold in prophecy. That such was the actual process of inference is shown by the legend of the Ascension in the first chapter of the "Acts," and especially by the words, "This Jesus who hath been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same manner in which ye beheld him going into heaven." In the Apocalypse, written A. D. 68, just after the death of Nero, this second coming is described as something immediately to happen, and the colours in which it is depicted show how closely allied were the Johannine notions to those of the Pharisees. The glories of the New Jerusalem are to be reserved for Jews, while for the Roman tyrants of Judæa is reserved a fearful retribution. They are to be trodden underfoot by the Messiah, like grapes in a wine-press, until the gushing blood shall rise to the height of the horse's bridle. " (The Unseen World, 107)

Hank Hanegraaff (2004)

"More and more, people who have embraced the Futurist paradigm, when they recognize.. that the book of Revelation was not written in the mid-nineties, but rather was written in the mid-sixties, ..they have a different view of what the book of Revelation is actually dealing with in terms of substance." (Voice of Reason, 11/21)

William Hurte (1884)

"That John saw these visions in the reign of Nero, and that they were written by him during his banishment by that emperor, is confirmed by**Theophylact**, Andreas, Arethas, and others. We judge, therefore, that this book was written about A.D. 68, and this agrees with other facts of history.. There are also several statements in this book which can only be understood on the ground that the judgment upon Jerusalem was then future." (*Catechetical Commentary*: Edinburgh, Scotland, 1884)

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown (1871)

"The following arguments favor an earlier date, namely, under Nero: (1)

EUSEBIUS [*Demonstration of the Gospel*] unites in the same sentence John's banishment with the stoning of James and the beheading of Paul, which were *under Nero*. (2) CLEMENT OFALEXANDRIA'S story of the robber reclaimed by John, after he had pursued, and with difficulty overtaken him, accords better with John then being a younger man than under Domitian, when he was one hundred years old. Arethas, in the sixth century, applies the sixth seal to the destruction of Jerusalem (A.D. 70), adding that the Apocalypse was written before that event. So the *Syriac version* states he was banished by Nero the Cæsar. Laodicea was overthrown by an earthquake (A.D. 60) but was immediately rebuilt, so that its being called "rich and increased with goods" is not incompatible with this book having been written under the Neronian persecution (A.D. 64). But the possible allusions to it in Heb 10:37; compare Re 1:4,8 4:8 22:12; Heb 11:10; compare Re 21:14; Heb 12:22,23; compare Re 14:1; Heb 8:1,2; compare Re 11:19 15:5 21:3; Heb 4:12; compare Re 1:16 2:12,16 19:13,15; Heb 4:9; compare Re 20:1-15; also 1Pe 1:7,13 4:13, with Re 1:1; 1Pe 2:9 with Re 5:10; 2Ti 4:8, with Re 2:26,27 3:21 11:18; Eph 6:12, with Re 12:7-12; Php 4:3, with Re 3:5 13:8,17:8 20:12,15; Col 1:18, with Re 1:5; 1Co 15:52, with Re 10:7 11:15-18, make a date before the destruction of Laodicea possible. Cerinthus is stated to have died before John; as then he borrowed much in his Pseudo-Apocalypse from John's, it is likely the latter was at an earlier date than Domitian's reign. See TILLOCH'S *Introduction to Apocalypse*. But the Pauline benediction (Re 1:4) implies it was written after Paul's death under Nero." (introduction to Revelation)

Arthur Cushman McGiffert (1890)

"Internal evidence has driven most modern scholars to the conclusion that the Apocalypse must have been written before the destruction of Jerusalem, the banishment therefore taking place under Nero instead of Domitian." (Eusebius, Church History, Book III, ch.5. Eusebius notes, 148, footnote 1.)

Jim McGuiggan

"Suppose Irenaeus said the Revelation was seen toward the end of the reign of Domitian. What is Irenaeus said it – does that make it infallibly correct? (*The Book of Revelation*, p. 184)

James M. MacDonald (1870)

"The question whether the Apocalypse was written at an early date or in the very closing period of the apostolic ministration has importance as bearing on the interpretation of the book. A true exposition depends, in no small degree, upon a knowledge of the existing condition of things at the time it was written ; i.e., of the true point in history occupied by the writer, and those whom he originally addressed... If the book were an epistle, like that to the Romans or Hebrews, it might be of contemporary little importance, in ascertaining its meaning, to be able to determine whether it was written at the commencement of the apostolic era or at its very close.

"It is very obvious that if the book itself throws any distinct light on this subject, this internal evidence, especially in the absence of reliable historical testimony, ought to be decisive. Instead of appealing to tradition or to some doubtful passage in an ancient father, we interrogate the book itself, or we listen to what the Spirit saith that was in him who testified of these things. It will be found that no book of the New Testament more abounds in passages which clearly have respect to the time when it was written." (*Life and Writings of John*, p. 151-152)

"So clear is the internal evidence in favor of the early date of the Apocalypse. And no evidence can be drawn from any part of the book favoring the later date so commonly assigned to it." (*Life and Writings of John*, p. 167)

"And when we open the book itself, and find inscribed on its very pages evidence that at the time it was written Jewish enemies were still arrogant and active, and the city in which our Lord was crucified, and the temple and the altar in it were still standing, we need no date from early antiquity, not even from the hand of the author himself, to inform us that he wrote before the great historical event and prophetic epoch, the destruction of Jerusalem." (*Life and Writings of John*, p. 171-172)

"There appear to have been but seven church in Asia... when the book was written. It is dedicated to these seven alone by the careful mention of them one by one by name, as if there were no others... The expression 'the seven churches' seems to imply that this constituted the whole number, and hence affords one of the most striking incidental proofs of an early date.. Those who contend for the later date, when there must have been a greater number of churches than the seven in the region designated by the apostle fail to give any sufficient reason for his mentioning no more. That they mystically or symbolically represented others is surely not such a reason." (*ibid*., p. 154)

Philip Schaff (1877)

"On two points I have changed my opinion — the second Roman captivity of Paul (which I am disposed to admit in the interest of the Pastoral Epistles), and the date of the Apocalypse (which I now assign, with the majority of modern critics, to the year 68 or 69 instead of 95, as before)." (Vol. I, Preface to the Revised Edition, 1882 *The History of the Christian Church*, volume 1)

"The early date [of Revelation] is now accepted by perhaps the majority of scholars." (*Encyclopedia* 3:2036.)

"Tertullian's legend of the Roman oil-martyrdom of John seems to point to Nero rather than to any other emperor, and was so understood by Jerome (Adv. Jovin. 1.26) (History 1:428.)

"The destruction of Jerusalem would be a worthy theme for the genius of a Christian Homer. It has been called "the most soul-stirring of all ancient history." But there was no Jeremiah to sing the funeral dirge of the city of David and Solomon. The Apocalypse was already written, and had predicted that the heathen "shall tread the holy city under foot forty and two months." (p. 397-398)

A.H. Strong (1907)

" Elliott's whole scheme [based on his "interpretation of `time and times and half a time' of Dan. 7:25, which according to the year-day theory means 1260 years..." p 1009, ed], however, is vitiated by the fact that he wrongly assumes the book of Revelation to have been written under Domitian (94 or 96), instead of under Nero (67 or 68). His *terminus a quo* is therefore incorrect, and his interpretation of chapters 5-9 is rendered very precarious. The year 1866, moreover, should have been the time of the end, and so the *terminus ad quem*seems to be clearly misunderstood–unless indeed the seventy-five supplementary years of Daniel are to be added to 1866. We regard the failure of this most ingenious scheme of Apocalyptic interpretation as a practical demonstration that a clear understanding of the meaning of the Prophecy is, before the event, impossible, and we are confirmed in this view by the utterly untenable nature of the theory of the millennium which is commonly held by so-called Second Adventists, a theory which we now proceed to examine. (*Systematic Theology*,A.H. Strong, ©1907, published 1912, The Griffith & Rowland Press, Boston, p 1010.)

B.F. Westcott (1825-1903)

"The irregularities of style in the Apocalypse appear to be due not so much to ignorance of the language as to a free treatment of it, by one who used it as a foreign dialect. Nor is it difficult to

see that in any case intercourse with a Greek-speaking people would in a short time naturally reduce the style of the author of the Apocalypse to that of the author of the Gospel. It is, however, very difficult to suppose that the language of the writer of the Gospel could pass at a later time in a Greek-speaking country into the language of the Apocalypse. . . .

"Of the two books the Apocalypse is the earlier. It is less developed both in thought and style. The material imagery in which it is composed includes the idea of progress in interpretation. . . .

"The Apocalypse is after the close of St. Paul's work. It shows in its mode of dealing with Old Testament figures a close connexion with the Epistle to the Hebrews (2 Peter, Jude). And on the other hand it is before the destruction of Jerusalem." (Brooke Foss *Westcott, The Gospel According to St. John* (Grand Rapids: Baker, [1908] 1980), pp. clxxiv-clxxv.)

Robert Young (1885)

"It was written in Patmos about A.D.68, whither John had been banished by Domitious Nero, as state in the title of the Syriac version of the book ; and with this concurs the express statement of Irenaeus in A.D.175, who says it happened in the reign of Domitia*nou* — ie., Domitious (Nero). Sulpicius, Orosius, etc., stupidly mistaking Domitia*nou* for Domitian*ikos*, supposed Irenaeus to refer to Domition, A.D. 95, and most succeeding writers have fallen into the same blunder. The internal testimony is wholly in favor of the earlier date." (*Commentary on Revelation – Young's Analytical Concordance*)

C.F.J. Zullig

"The Book (of Revelation) bears on it, not in one place, but in many, nay in its whole structure, an undeniable proof of having been written before the fall of Jerusalem." (Th. i., p. 137)

Jay E. Adams (1966)
"[the temple still standing in Revelation 11:1 is] unmistakable proof that Revelation was written before 70 A.D." (*The Time is at Hand*, p. 68).

"The Revelation was written to a persecuted church about to face the most tremendous onslaught it had ever known. It would be absurd (not to say cruel) for John to write a letter to persons in such circumstances which not only ignores their difficulties, but reveals numerous details about events supposed to transpire hundreds of years in the future during a seven year tribulation period at the end of the church age." (*The Time is at Hand*, p. 49)

"It is to remain unsealed *because* 'the time is at hand.' That is, its prophecies are about to be fulfilled. The events which it predicts do not pertain to the far distant future, but they are soon to happen. The message is for this generation, not for some future one." (*The Time is at Hand*, p. 51)

Adam Clarke (1837)
(On **Revelation 1:7**) "By this the Jewish People are most evidently intended, and therefore the whole verse may be understood as predicting the destruction of the Jews; and is a presumptive proof that the Apocalypse was written before the final overthrow of the Jewish state." (6:971.)

"Bengel has said much on these points, but to very little purpose; the word in the above place seems to signify delay simply, and probably refers to the long-suffering of God being ended in reference to Jerusalem; for I all along take for probable that this book was written previously to the destruction of that city." (Revelation 10)

Henry Cowles (1871)
"The conclusion to which I am brought after much investigation is that the historic testimony for the Domitian date is largely founded on a misconception of the passage from Irenaeus, and as a whole is by no means so harmonious, so ancient, and so decisive, as to overrule and set aside the strong internal evidence for the earlier date. I am compelled to accept the age of Nero as the true date of this writing." (**The Book of Revelation**)

David Crews (1994)
"The view accepted without much question by many Christians is that the Revelation was written in or around A.D.96, during the reign of the Caesar Domitian. This date of authorship would, of course, prevent the book from referring to the events of the Jewish War.. Simply put, the case for a late Domitian date hangs by a very slender thread. It is determined from a single statement by the Bishop of Lyons, named Irenaeus.. This statement is not an eyewitness testimony from Irenaeus, but is his recollection of what was said by an ever earlier man, Polycarp, who is supposed to have known John personally." [*Prophecy Fulfilled – God's Perfect Church* (Austin, TX: New Light Publishing, 1994), pp. 256,257]

F.W. Farrar (1886)
"there can be no reasonable doubt respecting the (early) date of the Apocalypse." (*The Early Days of Christianity*; NY, NY: A.L. Burt, 1884;p. 387)

"We cannot accept a dubious expression of the Bishop of Lyons as adequate to set aside an overwhelming weight of evidence, alike external and internal, in proof of the fact that the Apocalypse was written, at the latest, soon after the death of Nero." (*The Early Days of Christianity*; NY, NY: A.L. Burt, 1884; p. 408)

The reason why the early date and mainly contemporary explanation of the book is daily winning fresh adherents among unbiased thinkers of every Church and school, is partly because it rests on so simple and secure a basis, and partly because no other can compete with it. It is indeed the only system which is built on the plain and repeated statements and indications of the Seer himself and the corresponding events are so closely accordant with the symbols as to make it certain that this scheme of interpretation is the only one that can survive. (*The Early Days of Christianity*; NY, NY: A.L. Burt, 1884; p. 434)

Ken Gentry (1989)

"My confident conviction is that a solid case for a Neronic date for Revelation can be set forth from the available evidences, both internal and external. In fact, I would lean toward a date after the outbreak of the Neronic persecution in late A.D.64 and before the declaration of the Jewish war in early A.D.67. A date in either A.D.65 or early A.D.66 would seem most suitable." (*Before Jerusalem Fell* (Tyler, TX: ICE, 1989), 336.)

"John emphasizes his anticipation of the soon occurrences of his prophecy by *strategic placement* of these time references. He places his boldest time statements in both the introduction and conclusion to Revelation. It is remarkable that so many recent commentators have missed it literally coming and going! The statement of expectancy is found three times in the first chapter – twice in the first three verses: Revelation 1:1,3,19. The same idea is found four times in his concluding remarks: Revelation 22:6,7,12,20. *It is as if John carefully*

bracketed the entire work to avoid any confusion." (*The Beast of Revelation*; Tyler, TX; ICE, 1982; p. 21-22).

"Think of it: If these words in these verses do not indicate that John expected the events to occur soon, *what words could John have used to express such*? How could he have said it more plainly?" (*The Beast of Revelation*; Tyler, TX; ICE, 1982; p. 24).

"It seems indisputably clear that the book of Revelation must be dated in the reign of Nero Caesar, and consequently *before* his death in June, A.D.68. He is the sixth king; the short-lived rule of the seventh king (Galba) "has not yet come." (*Before Jerusalem Fell* (Tyler, TX: ICE, 1989; 158.)

Steve Gregg (1997)

"Many scholars, including those supportive of a late date, have said that there is no historical proof that there was an empire-wide persecution of Christians even in Domitian's reign." (*Revelation: Four Views*, p.16)

"Since the text is admittedly "uncertain" in many places, and the quotation in question is known only from a Latin translation of the original, we must not place too high a degree of certainty upon our preferred reading of the statement of Irenaeus." (*Revelation: Four Views*, p. 18)

Francis Nigel Lee

It is difficult to see why the A.D. 130ff Irenaeus would have referred (as he did) to "ancient copies" (rather than simply to "copies") – tithe original autograph had itself been written on~ "towards the end of Domitian's rule." . . . For then, the first "ancient copies" would and could

only have been made after A.D. 96 — whereas Irenaeus implies that those ancient copies were made before that date! Moreover, even if the copies were made only after A.D. 96 – they could hardly have been called "ancient" by the time of Irenaeus (born 130 A.D.). Still less could such first copies then (at a date only after 96 A. D.) appropriately have been described by Irenaeus as "the most approved and ancient copies." Surely the compilation of many copies would thereafter require even further time. And the further determination of such of those approved and ancient copies as Irenaeus refers to as the "most approved and ancient copies" of the original, would need a further long time to take place. (Francis Nigel Lee, " *Revelation and Jerusalem*" (Brisbane, Australia by the author, 1985).

"Advocates of the Early-Church-in-general's earlier (Neronic) date for the book of Revelation, include: Epiphanius, Andreas of Caesarea, Arethas of Caesarea, Theophylact, Annius, Caponsacchius, Hentenius, Salmeron, Alcazar, Grotius, Hammond, Wettsteign, Harenberg, Herder, Hartwig, Guerike, Moses Stuart, Adam Clark, Zuellig, Luecke, Bleek, Duesterdieck, Lightfoot, Westcott, Hort, Van Andel, A.D. Barnes, J.M. Ford, C. Vanderwaal, Leon Morris, J.A.T. Robinson, F.N. Lee, K.L. Gentry, Jr.., and David Chilton. Significantly, the A.D. 400 Church Father Epiphaneaus gave a very early date to the Book of Revelation based on Mt. 24:7 & Acts 11:28 & 18:2. cs. Rev 6:2-8."

Ovid Need Jr. (2001)

"I will say in opening that Revelation chapter eleven almost requires that the date of the book be pre 70 AD, for there the temple and altar are still standing, as well as the city where our Lord was crucified, v. 8. (*International Bible Encyclopedia*, s.v. Revelation, book of. 1917.)

Admittedly, there are good arguments for both an early and a later date of the Revelation. However, I believe Biblical evidence requires an early date, before 70AD. As an introductory

statement, let me mention that prophecy is from the time it is written, NOT FROM THE TIME IT IS READ.

A pre 70 AD date would make the purpose of the Revelation the same as was Isaiah's prophecy — that is, to see the faithful people of God through the extremely difficult times ahead as their then known world was going to be shaken to its very foundation by the judgment of God against Babylon. (Revelation: Date, Time and Purpose)

Ernest Renan
"It may be that, after the crisis of the year 68 (the date of the Apocalypse) and of the year 70 (the destruction of Jerusalem), the old Apostle, with an ardent and plastic spirit, disabused of the belief in a near appearance of the Son of Man in the clouds, may have inclined towards the ideas that he found around him, of which several agreed sufficiently well with certain Christian doctrines. " (**Life of Jesus**)

R.C. Sproul (1998)
"If the book of Revelation was written after the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, it seems strange that John would be silent about these cataclysmic events. Granted this is an argument from silence, but the silence is deafening. Not only does Revelation not mention the temple's destruction as a past event, it frequently refers to the temple as still standing. This is seen clearly in Revelation 11 ...Gentry gives impressive evidence to support this conclusion." (*Last Days*, pp.147-149)

Moses Stuart (1845)
"The testimony in respect to the matter before us is evidently successive and dependent, not coetaneous and independent. . (1:282. 81)

"If now the number of the witnesses were the only thing which should control our judgment in relation to the question proposed, we must, so far as external evidence is concerned, yield the palm to those who fix upon the time of Domitian. But a careful examination of this matter shows, that the whole concatenation of witnesses in favour of this position hangs upon the testimony of Irenaeus, and their evidence is little more than a mere repetition of what he has said. Eusebius and Jerome most plainly depend on him; and others seem to have had in view his authority, or else that of Eusebius." (Ibid. 2:269..)

"I say this, with full recognition of the weight and value of Irenaeus's testimony, as to any matters of fact with which he was acquainted, or as to the common tradition of the churches. But in view of what Origen has said. . . , how can we well suppose, that the opinion of Irenaeus, as recorded in Cont. Haeres, V. 30 was formed in any other way, than by his own interpretation of Rev. 1:9. (1:281)

"Now it strikes me, that Tertullian plainly means to class Peter, Paul, and John together, as having suffered at nearly the same time and under the same emperor. I concede that this is not a construction absolutely necessary; but I submit it to the candid, whether it is not the most probable." (1 :284n.)

"It seems indisputably clear that the book of Revelation must be dated in the reign of Nero Caesar, and consequently before his death in June, A.D. 68. He is the sixth king; the short-lived rule of the seventh king (Galba) "has not yet come." (2:324)

"A majority of the older critics have been inclined to adopt the opinion of Irenaeus, viz., that it was written during the reign of Domitian, i.e., during the last part of the first century, or in A.D.95 or 96. Most of the recent commentators and critics have called this opinion in question, and placed the composition of the book at an earlier period, viz., before the

destruction of Jerusalem." (*A Commentary on the Apocalypse*, 2 vols; Andover, MD: Allen, Morrill, and Wardwell, 1845; p. 1:263)

"The manner of the declaration here seems to decide, beyond all reasonable appeal, against a later period than about A.D.67 or 68, for the composition of the Apocalypse." (*A Commentary on the Apocalypse*, 2 vols; Andover, MD: Allen, Morrill, and Wardwell, 1845; p. 2:326)

Milton Terry (1898)
"the trend of modem criticism is unmistakably toward the adoption of the early date of the Apocalypse." (p. 241n.)

"It is therefore not to be supposed that the language, or style of thought, or type of doctrine must needs resemble those of other production of the same author .. the difference of language is further accounted for by the supposition that the apocalypse was written by the apostle at an early period of his ministry, and the gospel and epistles some thirty or forty years later." (***Biblical Apocalyptics***, p. 255)

"A fair weighing of the arguments thus far adduced shows that they all excepting the statement of Irenaeus, favor the early rather than later date. The facts appealed to indicate the times before rather than after the destruction of Jerusalem." (*ibid.*,258)

Now, there is no contention that Galatians and Hebrews were written before the destruction of Jerusalem, and, to say the least, the most natural explanation of the allusions referred to is to suppose that the Apocalypse was already written, and that Paul and many others of his day were familiar with its contents. Writers who cite passages from the apostolic fathers to prove the priority of the gospel of John are the last persons in the world who should presume to

dispute the obvious priority of the Apocalypse of John to Galatians and Hebrews. For in no case are the alleged quotations of Gospel more notable or striking than these allusions to the Apocalypse in the New Testament epistles." (*ibid.*,260)

"The verb *was seen* is ambiguous and may be either it, referring to the Apocalypse, or *he*, referring to John himself." (*Biblical Hermeneutics*, p. 238)

Vanderwaal (1989)

"We cannot accept all the arguments of J.A.T. Robinson in his book *Redating the New Testament* (London, 1976), but we agree with his conclusion that all the books of the New Testament were written before the year A.D.70." (Cited in James E. Priest, "Contemporary Apocalyptic Scholarship and the Revelation," in *Johannie Studies: Essays in Honor of Frank Pack,* ed. James E. Priest; Malibu, CA: Pepperdine University Press; p. 199, n. 75)

"The book of Revelation presents a clear testimony to the churches in the first century. To be more specific, I am convinced that Revelation was written in the seventh decade of the first century – *before* the destruction of Jerusalem in the year 70, which Jesus talked about in Matthew 24." (*Hal Lindsey and Bible Prophecy*; St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada: Paideia Press, 1978; p. 12)

George Edmundson (1913)
"I mean the Apocalypse of St. John. The Apocalypse is full of references to historical events of which the author had quite recently been himself an eyewitness at Rome, or which were fresh in the memories of the Roman Christians with whom he had been associating, and it can be dated with great exactitude from internal evidence as having been written at the beginning of the year 70 A.D." (**The Church in Rome in the First Century** PDF)

Tim LaHaye (2002)
Misread Rapture! – The Washington Times (1/24/02) "Mr. LaHaye calls the preterist interpretation "the most ridiculous view of eschatology I've ever heard. ... Historically, the fact is the church *has always believed* that the book of Revelation was written by the Apostle John in 95 A.D., 25 years after the destruction of Jerusalem. Consequently, it has to portray future events."

George E. Ladd (1972)
"The problem with this [Domitian date] theory is that there is no evidence that during the last decade of the first century there occurred any open and systematic persecution of the church ." (George E. Ladd, *A Commentary on Revelation (*Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1972), p. 8.)

J.W. Roberts (1972)
"According to Robert Feuillet the nearest thing to a consensus that has been reached about the study of Revelation in this century is that the original author and readers understood the book to be speaking about events connected with and/or in the immediate future of the age in which it was written; i.e., it is to be interpreted from the preterist point of view." ("The Meaning of the Eschatology in the Book of Revelation," *Restoration Quarterly* 15: 96)

C. Torrey (1941)

"There are indeed very obvious reasons why the Apocalypse should now seem to call for drastic alteration, for it cannot be made to fit the present scheme of New Testament dogma. If the Church in its beginnings was mainly Gentile and opposed to Judaism, this Book of Revelation can hardly be understood. It is very plainly a mixture of Jewish and Christian elements, and the hope of effecting a separation of the two naturally suggests itself It is, however, a perfectly futile dream, as the many attempts have abundantly shown. Every chapter in the book is both Jewish and Christian, and only by very arbitrary proceedings can signs of literary composition be formed. The trouble is not with the book, but with the prevailing theory of Christian origins.' (*Documents of the Primitive Church* , p. 77.)

G.H. Van Kooten

"The only comparable independent patristic information (on the dating of Revelation) seems to be provided by Clement of Alexandria, according to whom 'on the tyrant's death, he [i.e. John] returned to Ephesus from the isle of Patmos' (What Rich Man Can Be Saved? 42). Clement, however, does not specify this tyrant's identity, and it is only Eusebius who, when quoting Clement, assumes, in the light of Irenaeus' claims, that this tyrant is Domitian (Church History, 3.23.5). Clement himself appears to apply the contents of Daniel's prophecies, which also resonate in Revelation, to the year of the four emperors in Stromata 1.21: 'Nero held sway, and in the holy city Jerusalem placed the abomination: and.. he was taken away, and Otho, and Galba, and Vitellius. And Vespasian rose to the supreme power, and destroyed Jerusalem.'" (**The Year of the Four Emperors and the Revelation of John** PDF)

H.A. Whittaker

"In A.D. 66, the well supported early date for the writing of Revelation, Jerusalem also was a city which 'had a kingdom over the kings of the Land.' Indeed, not only was Jerusalem a city with special authority over the various tetrarchies adjoining Judaea, but also the temple had an

amazing degree of authority over Jewish communities in all parts of the Roman empire." (Revelation, page 214).

David E. Aune (1977)
"The keystone of Robinson's enterprise is an argument from silence: none of the books of the New Testament refers, either implicitly or explicitly, to the catastrophic event of the fall of Jerusalem to the Roman legions under Titus in A.D.70. Had they written after that date, so the argument runs, they would surely have at least alluded to that crucial event." (Review of *Redating the New Testament*, by John A.T. Robinson, "When Was the New Testament Written?" *Christianity Today* 21, April 15, 1977; p. 43)

"On balance, the virtues far outweigh the faults. The book deserves wide circulation among students of the New Testament, since scholarly opinion (whether conservative or liberal) should regularly examine its assumptions and conclusions. In passing, it is perhaps important to note that Robinson makes elaborate use of the scholarship of Theodore Zahn, perhaps the most brilliant conservative New Testament scholar in the last century.. Let us hope that he will be heard." (Review of *Redating the New Testament*, by John A.T. Robinson, "When Was the New Testament Written?" *Christianity Today* 21, April 15, 1977; p. 45)

G.R. Beasley-Murray (1983)
"The traditional belief that Revelation was written near the close of the reign of the Emperor

Domitian, about A.D.96, is likely to be right, thought it is not impossible that it was written in the confused period that immediately followed Nero's death in A.D.68." ("Preaching the Eschatological Texts," in *Biblical Preaching: An Expositor's Treasury*, ed.; Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, p. 356)

Dr. E. Earle Ellis (1980)
"At the same time in some New Testament books the silence about the destruction of Jerusalem *is* very surprising; that is, in books where Jesus' prophecy of the destruction appears (Matthew, Mark, Luke), where the critique of the temple or its transitory character is a major theme (Acts, Hebrews) and where God's judgments on a disobedient Jewish nation are of particular interest to the writer (Acts, Jude). In these cases the absence of any illusion to the destruction would seem to be a fairly strong argument that such books were written before that event took place. The fall of Jerusalem is important in another respect. It marked not only the catastrophic destruction of a city but also the end of the Jewish world as it had been known." ("Dating the New Testament", *New Testament Studies*, 26; p. 488)

Joseph A. Fitzmeyer (1978)
"I must admit that what Robinson writes about the Book of Revelation makes a great deal of sense. Here is a case where I might be incliuned in the future to admit a pre-seventy dating." (Review of *Redating the New Testament*, by John. A.T. Robinson, "Two Views of New Testament Interpretation: Popular and Technical, *Interpretation 32;* 1978, p. 312)

James Moffatt (1911)
"For recent defences of the Neronic date, see Hort (cp. JC. 160 f.), Simcox, Selwyn (op. fit. pp. 215f.), and B. W. Henderson (Life and Principate of Nero, 439 f.). The Domitianic date is argued, in addition to older critics like Mill, Hug, and Eichhom, by Hofmann, Lee, Havet, Milligan (Discussions. 75-148), Alford, Gloag (Introd. Joh. Writings}, Salmon (INT. 221-245),

Schafer (Einl. 347-355), Godet, Holtzmann, Comely, Belser, Jillichex, Weizsacker, Harnack (ACL. ii. i. pp. 245 f.), McGiffert (AA. 634 f.), Zahn, Wernle, von Soden, Adeney (INT. 464 f.), Bousset, von Dobschuu, Well- hausen, Porter, R. Knopf (NZ. 38f.), Abbott, Kreyenbtlhl (Das Evglnt der Wahrheit, ii. 730 f.), Forbes, Swete, A. V. Green (Effusion Canonical Writings, 182 f.), and A. S. Peake (INT. i64f.), as well as t, from outlying fields, by J. Reville (Origines de repiscopal, i. 209 f.), F. C. Arnold (Die Neronische Christcnverfolgung, 1888), Neumann (LC., 1888, 842-843, reviewing Arnold), Ramsay (ORE. pp. 268-302, ET. xvi. 171-174, Seven Letters, 93-127), S. Gsell (Kfgne de timpereur Domititn, 1895, pp. 307 f.), Matthaei (Preussische Jahrb., 1905, 402-479), and E. T. Klette (Die Christenkatastrophe unter Nero, 1907, 46-48). (An Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament, p.508)

Robert Mounce (1977)

"the Cambridge trio (Westcott, Lightfoot, and Hort) were unanimous in assigning the Apocalypse to the reign of Nero or the years immediately following." And "such a threefold cord of scholarly opinion is not quickly broken" but that he (Swete) is "unable to see that the historical situation presupposed by the Apocalypse contradicts the testimony of Irenaeus which assigns the vision to the end of the reign of Domitian." Mounce seem to agree with Swete on this (p. 21).

J.A.T. Robinson (1976)

"It is indeed generally agreed that this passage must bespeak a pre-70 situation. . . . There seems therefore no reason why the oracle should not have been uttered by a Christian prophet as the doom of the city drew nigh." (*Redating the New Testament* pp.. 240-242).

"It was at this point that I began to ask myself just why any of the books of the New Testament needed to be put after the fall of Jerusalem in 70. As one began to look at them, and in particular the epistle to the Hebrews, Acts and the Apocalypse, was it not strange that this

cataclysmic event was never once mentioned or apparently hinted at (as a past fact)? (*Redating*, p. 10).

"One of the oddest facts about the New Testament is that what on any showing would appear to be the single most datable and climactic event of the period — the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 — is never once mentioned as a past fact. . . . [T]he silence is nevertheless as significant as the silence for Sherlock Holmes of the dog that did not bark". (*Ibid*., p. 13.)

"If the Book of Revelation was written after the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, it seems strange that John would be silent about these cataclysmic events. Granted this is an argument from silence, but the silence is deafening." (*The Last Days According to Jesus*, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1998; p. 147)

N.I.V. Study Bible (1973)
"Revelation was written when Christians were entering a time of persecution. The two periods most often mentioned are the latter part of Nero's reign (A.D.54-68) and the latter part of Dominian's reign (81-96).

Albert Schweitzer (1906)
"The apocalyptic discourses in Mark xiii., Matt. xxiv., and Luke xxi. are interpolated. A Jewish-Christian apocalypse of the first century, probably composed before the destruction of Jerusalem, has been interwoven with a short exhortation which Jesus gave on the occasion when He predicted the destruction of the temple.. His construction rests upon two main points of support; upon his view of the sources and his conception of the eschatology of the time of Jesus. In his view the sole source for the Life of Jesus is the Gospel of Mark, which was "probably written exactly in the year 73," five years after the Johannine apocalypse." (Quest for the Historical Jesus)

A.N. Wilson (1977)

"There is no concrete and inescapable reference, in any of the New Testament books, to the destruction of Jerusalem, and is this in itself not a pretty surprising fact? Would we not expect one of these writers, particularly those of a triumphalist turn of mind, to make it clear that the very core and centre of Jewish worship had been obliterated? Such a radical view inspired J.A.T. Robinson's 'Redating the New Testament,' which made a spirited case for supposing that all the books of the canon were completed before 70." (Paul: The Mind of the Apostle, p. 254)

"The historian who tries to date and place John's Revelation is guided by the author to a quite specific time span. The words of Revelation are written down four years after the Roman fire, and shortly after Nero's own death. We know that they were written before the ultimate calamity of the Sack of Jerusalem by the Romans in AD 70…He writes of the earthly temple as still in existence [Rev 11:1-2]." (Paul: The Mind of the Apostle, p. 11)

Herbert B. Workman (1906)

"St. John's banishment to Patmos was itself a result of the great persecution of Nero. Hard labour for life in the mines and quarries of certain islands, especially Sardinia, formed one of the commonest punishments for Christians. . . . He lived through the horrors of two great persecutions, and died quietly in extreme old age at Ephesus." (*Persecution in the Early Church*, pp. 18, 19).

ADVOCATES FOR THE EARLY DATE OF REVELATION
(20TH-21ST CENTURIES)

Greg Bahnsen (1984)

"When we combine the names (of the pre-20th century advocates of the early dating of the

Apocalypse of John) with the yet outstanding stature of Schaff, Terry, Lightfoot, Westcott, and Hort, we can feel the severity of Beckwith's *understatement* when in 1919 he described the Neronian dating for Revelation as "a view held by many down to recent times." By many indeed! It has been described, as we saw above, as "the ruling view" of critics," by "the majority of modern critics," by "most modern scholars," and by "the whole force of modern criticism." The weight of scholarship placed behind the Neronian option for the dating of Revelation has been staggering. In our won day it has gained the support of such worthies as C.C. Torrey, J.A.T. Robinson, and F.F. Bruce and has been popularized by Jay Adams. In 1956 Torrey could write about the number 666, "It is now the accepted conclusion that the beast is the emperor Nero." (Historical Setting for the Dating of Revelation)

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ADVOCATES FOR THE EARLY DATE OF REVELATION (PRIOR TO THE 20TH CENTURY)

Greg Bahnsen (1984)

"A partial list of scholars who have supported the early date for Revelation, gleaned unsystematically from my reading, would include the following 18th and 19th writers not already mentioned just above: John Lightfoot, Harenbert, Hartwig, Michaelis, Tholuck, Clarke, Bishop Newton, James MacDonald, Gieseler, Tilloch, Bause, Zullig, Swegler, De Wette, Lucke, Bohmer, Hilgenfeld, Mommsen, Ewald, Neander, Volkmar, Renan, Credner, Kernkel, B. Weiss, Reuss, Thiersch, Bunsen, Stier, Auberlen, Maurice, Niermeyer, Desprez, Aube, Keim, De Pressence, Cowles, Scholten, Beck, Dusterdiek, Simcox, S. Davidson, Beyschlag, Salmon, Hausrath. Continuing on into the 20th century we could list Plummer, Selwyn, J.V. Bartlet, C.A. Scott, Erbes, Edmundson, Henderson, and others. If one's reading has been limited pretty much to the present and immediately preceding generations of writers on Revelation, then the foregoing names may be somewhat unfamiliar to him, but they were not unrecognized in previous eras. When we combine these names with the yet outstanding stature of Schaff, Terry, Lightfoot, Westcott, and Hort, we can feel the severity of Beckwith's *understatement* when in 1919 he described the Neronian dating for Revelation as "a view held by many down to recent times." (Historical Setting for the Dating of Revelation)

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DATING THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT – OR – THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES

by Jim Seghers

The majority of modern scripture scholars attribute late dates to the composition of the New Testament books in the form that we now have them. This is particularly true of the four Gospels. It is usually claimed that Mark was the first gospel written around A.D. 70. Matthew's composition is dated in the 80's, followed by Luke in the late 80's. The Gospel of John is given a composition date in the 90's.

One may be inclined to think, "So what! After all, regardless of the dates attributed to their composition, each book remains the written word of God because the Holy Spirit is the principal author. What does it matter?" Actually, it matters a great deal.

One naturally assumes that the proponents of late composition dates, men with academic degrees, base their conclusions on sound scholarship that is rooted in recent discoveries in History, Archeology, Patristics, Papyrology and other related fields. This is especially true because these scholars pride themselves on their "scientific" approach to biblical interpretation. Certainly, it would seem that their arguments must be buttressed by the data coming from objective research. Nothing could be further from the truth. Those supporting late authorship base their statements solely on the wobbly foundation of their own fanciful imaginations. Why is this so?

Late authorship fits conveniently into their first principles, which rejects the possibility of any reality that is beyond the scope of their personal experience. They make the limits of their finite intellects and narrow experiences the measure of God's activity in the world he created out of nothing. Thus accounts of miracles, the resurrection, claims that Jesus is God, the definition of his mission, the founding of the Church with its hierarchical authority, and statements attributed to Jesus cannot be part of what is the actual inspired word of God. Rather these "beliefs" are explained away as a late editing which merely reflects the tenets of Christians far removed from eyewitnesses and the actual words of Jesus. These claims, of course, have no

documented foundation in any historical sense of the word. In order to support this evolutionary flight of fancy it is necessary to claim that the gospels had late compositions.

Starting from this faithless, secular viewpoint it is easy to understand why Mark was selected as the first gospel written and the source of Matthew and Luke. This is expedient because Mark lacks many of the "embellishments" found in Matthew and Luke, for example, the institution of the Church on Peter, and the miracles surrounding Jesus birth. Support is drawn from another fashionable invention the Q document, so called from the German word *quelle*, "source." "Q" is a hypothetical source from which it is claimed the Synoptic Gospels drew common material. There is no historical evidence that Q ever existed except, of course, in the fertile imaginations of revisionist scholars. The result of this foolishness is a whole system of biblical interpretation based on the myths fabricated by their creators who, themselves, have become the embodiment of the fable, *The Emperor's New Clothes*. In the fable of *The Emperor's New Clothes*, it required the uninhibited innocence of a child to proclaim, "The king is Nude!"

The resulting interpretations of many modern biblical scholars are so methodologically flawed that they should be the subjects of derision not serious study. Unfortunately, just as in the fable there were many that gawkishly admired the Emperor's invisible attire, so today there are many who fawn over these illusionary conclusions based on invisible data. At the college and university levels these speculations are taught with indiscriminate dogmatism. Woe to the inquiring student who dares to challenge these pronouncements! One is left to wonder if St. Paul foresaw these times when he prophesied: "For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own liking, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander into myths" (2 Tim 4:4). Fortunately, amid this academic madness there are voices that are erxposing the nudity of much in modern biblical studies.

As it relates to the dating of New Testament books, the pioneering labor of John A. T. Robinson in his scholarly work *Redating the NewTestament* is of great importance. He argues persuasively that all the books of the New Testament were written before 70 A.D. Modernists have refused to seriously investigate his scholarship, choosing instead to ignore it. However, Robinson's thesis provides a reasonable assumption of composition dates based on sound scholarship not ideological illusion.

Recently the scholarly work of the papyrologist, Carsten Peter Thiede, has received widespread notice. He persuasively argues that Matthew's Gospel is the account of an eyewitness to the events of Jesus' life. His pathfinding book written with Matthew D'Ancona,*Eyewitness to Jesus*, published in 1996, argues that the Magdalen Papyrus of St. Matthew's Gospel was written around A.D. 60.

Between Robinson and Thiede other persuasive voices have also challenged the late dating nonsense. Gunther Zuntz, the internationally recognized authority on Hellenistic Greek, assigned the date 40 A.D. as the most likely date of Mark's composition. Orchard and Riley in their book, *The Order of the Synoptics*, argue that Matthew was written in A.D. 43. Reicke's "Synoptic Prophecies on the Destruction of Jerusalem," in *Studies in New Testament and Early Christian Literature: Essays in Honor of Allen P. Wikgren*, 1972, give the years 50-64 A.D. for the composition of Matthew. Eta Linnemann's two works: *Historical Criticism of the Bible: Methodology or Ideology?* and *Is There a Synoptic Problem? Rethinking the Literary Dependence of the First Three Gospels* provide a piercing debunking of the myths of modern biblical scholarship. What makes her arguments so penetrating is the fact that she studied under Rudolf Bultmann and Ernst Fuchs.

Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr. in his doctoral dissertation, *Before Jerusalem Fell: Dating the Book of Revelation*, argues persuasively that John wrote the Book of Revelation before 70 A.D. David

Chilton in his excellent commentary on the Book of Revelation, *The Days of Vengeance*, comes to the same conclusion. Dating of the Book of Revelation is important since even most revisionist scholars affirm that it was the last New Testament book written.

The impressive work of Claude Tresmontant, a distinguished scholar at the Sorbonne, confirms Robinson's thesis. He bases his arguments on language and archaeology. He points out, for example, that in John 5:2 that "there **is** [*estin* in Greek, not "was"] at Jerusalem, at the sheep gate, a pool named in Hebrew Bethzatha. It has five porticos." This makes no sense if Jerusalem was reduced to a heap of stones 25 or 30 years earlier. (See: Claude Tresmontant, *The Hebrew Christ* and *The Gospel of Matthew*.) Father Jean Carmignac of Paris also assigns early composition to the four Gospels. Carmignac, a philologist with exceptional skills in biblical Hebrew, was a noted scholar of the Dead Sea scrolls and the world's most renowned expert on the Our Father. His *The Birth of the Synoptic Gospels* is a lucid summary of his thesis.

As a result of the persuasive erudition of these and other scholars a shift is occurring away from the blind acceptance of late New Testament authorship. An example of this shift is reflected in Fr. George H. Duggan's fine article in the May 1997 issue of *Homiletic & Pastoral Review* titled: "The Dates of the Gospels." By the grace of God may this trend continue!

February 7, 1998

Dr. George W. Knight III
"What does it matter when the book of Revelation was written? Much more than one might imagine! In fact, this seemingly obscure historical detail has become the central focus on the debate over Bible prophecy. The ramifications of the debate reach far beyond the theoretical."

"When Revelation was revealed to John and written down for the Church to read and understand, it had an immediate impact. Christians were about to witness one of the most devastating judgments in history- the destruction of Jerusalem."

Hort
"It is, of course, possible that Irenaeus made a mistake." (Cited in Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, p. 957)

- Preterism Review – Did Fitzmeyer and Bruce endorse the early date for Revelation?
- Revere Franklin Weidner: Annotations on the Revelation of St John, the Divine (Chicago Lutheran: 1898) "There is some difficulty in determining the date of the Apocalypse. The majority of modern critical historians and commentators, diverse as may be their views on other points, agree in this, that the Apocalypse, no matter by whom written, was composed between the death of Nero (June 9, 68 A.D.) and the destruction of Jerusalem (August 10, 70 A.D.)"

- The literary remains of Samuel Taylor Coleridge "I see no reason for doubting the real date of the Apocalypse is under Vespasian.. it seems to me quite lawless to deny it."
- **The Importance of Revelation's Date | Against Dispensationalism** "Our blog seeks to explain, promote and defend postmillennialism, which is optimistic about the future conquest of the gospel of Jesus Christ."
- **Firmin Abauzit**: **An Historical Discourse on the Apocalypse** (1730) Reputed by Wikipedia (falsely) as the earliest Full Preterist. Another PreteristArchive.com addition to the WWW! (NOTE: 100 PAGES IN JPG FORMAT) Thomas Ice: "Firmin Abauzit (1679-1767) of Geneva, who was a friend of Rousseau and Voltaire, published a commentary on Revelation in 1730 titled Historic Discourse on the Apocalypse, in which he advocated a more complete preterist view than his predecessors."
- **James Glasgow**: ***The Apocalypse Translated and Expounded*** (1872 PDF) – Early Dating Advocate, Sets at AD 51. "Daniel's prophecy of the seventy weeks presents an irrefragable proof that the whole of the New Testament, the Apocalypse included, must have

been written before the fall of Jerusalem and the end of the Jewish kingdom." "When did the seventy weeks end ? No date later than that of the fall of Jerusalem (a.d. 70) can with any truth or plausibility be supposed, for these weeks were "determined on the holy city." But many say they ended earlier, — at the death of Christ. Against this, however, in the above, and some other particulars, there lie weighty objections, as Scaliger, Hales, and others have shown. Let us look at the objects which were to be accomplished before these weeks ran out. " // "Many of the visions and words of the prophets are still receiving fulfilment ; and not until the end of the gospel age is all prophecy fulfilled. Some were fulfilled at the death of Christ, some in the fall of the city and dispersion of the people, and some in the progressive influx of the Gentiles ; while many regarding Gentiles and outcast Jews are yet to pass into fulfilment."

- **James MacDonald**: **Date of the Apocalypse From Internal Evidence** (1869 PDF)

- **J.D. Michaelis** – **The Apocalypse** (1801 English Edition PDF) "the Apocalypse contains prophecies with which the very persons to whom it was sent were immediately concerned. But if none of these prophecies were designed to be completed till long after their death, those persons were not immediately concerned with them, and the author would surely not have said that they were blessed in reading prophecies of which the time was at hand, if those prophecies were not to be fulfilled till after the lapse of many ages"

- Bernard Henderson – **The Life and Principate of Emperor Nero** (1903 PDF) "The verses (of Revelation) 17. 10, can be differently explained. Almost certainly Caesar is not the first, but Augustus, so we have "five fallen," "one is," "one is not yet come and is to continue a short space," and " the beast that was and is not, even he is the eighth and is of the seven " (certainly = Nero, cf. 13. 3 ; 17. 8). The list then is, on the two rival theories, (a) Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, Nero = the five. Galba = he who is; Galba's successor (naturally unknown ex hyp.) = the one to come, but he can only last a short time because the end is fast

approaching, and besides the pseudo-Nero is already active. Nero again = the eighth. (b) Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, Nero = the five. Vespasian = he who is. His successor is undefined because " the writer did not like to say the reigning Emperor would be overthrown." Nero again = the eighth. For the Domitian theory I fail to see any possibility of a satisfactory list at all."